

FATHER ANTON'S WORDS OF WISDOM: In today's Gospel the blind men call out "Son of David, have pity on me." Jesus hearing their plea heals them. Because of the pettiness and envy of the Scribes and Pharisees, and their huge ego's they are quick to condemn him.

In fact they go as far as to say that he performs these miracles not in the name of God, but rather in the name of Satan. How difficult it must have been for Christ to put up with all this small mindedness and jealousy; yet he continued to do what his Father called him to do: Make visible the power of God in the lives of the people; to reveal his love and mercy; to show he is quick to forgive; and to witness his special care to the poor and downtrodden.

All of us in one way or another are blind to the things we see happening around us. We choose to close our eyes to the suffering of others, to injustice, to oppression, to poverty and to indifference. I don't think that we choose this because we are an evil people, but simply because it is easier. If we don't see, we don't feel obligated to react. If we don't see we are able to justify our own lives. Yes, we too, cry out "Son of David, have pity on me." Until we are willing to open our eyes; it is impossible for us to open our hearts. I don't speak of our physical sight here, but rather our spiritual sight. If we cannot look at ourselves as if in the mirror, and see ourselves for who we really are; how can we expect to be able to look at others and see them as they are?

This blindness of our world, and often times even our own Churches is what causes the worst pain in another's life. I know from my own life experience that I could deal with the many challenges that came my way with the support of good friends and family. I also know that at those times when I was alone and there were no family or friends around; how overwhelming these challenges came. They were no longer challenges, they were burdens. Isn't it amazing! You and I have the power to lift the burdens off another's back. We cannot always take away another's pain and suffering, but we can help to alleviate it. We can offer kind words,

practical assistance and our prayers. We can share our faith, and tell stories like Jesus did about how our difficulties were no longer burdensome when we invited the love of God into our lives; when we were truly able with faith, to "Let go and Let God!"

There will always be someone there to criticize you when you do something good for another, or show charity, or talk about your faith, but that should never be a deterrent. The power of the early Church was the zeal of the people. They were so on fire with their belief in Jesus and his message that they looked for any opportunity to live it. They were open to, and received the Holy Spirit. It burned within them and nothing could stop them. Their spiritual eyes were opened.

Let us pray:

Loving Jesus, heal my spiritual blindness. Give me the courage to look at myself with honesty, and see who I truly am. Only then will I see others as they are. Only then will I be able to minister to them as you minister to me. Help me to stop making excuses for why I cannot touch the life of another in a meaningful way, and show me how easy it is to reach out in love. Remind me when I am doing good to another it is your eyes, your heart and your hands that work through me. Amen.